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ABSTRACT

Data for evaluation of the Mobile Remedial Unit, instituted to assist approximately 250 isolated Queensland children with learning difficulties during 1978 and 1979, were obtained by visits to 10 schools; discussions with principals, teachers, administrators, and the 2 mobile remedial teachers; document analysis; and travel with a remedial teacher and mobile unit for 1 week to 5 schools. In 1977, because of distances between centres where remedial teachers were stationed in South-West Queensland, only 9 of 38 primary schools (Years 2 through 7) had access to a remedial teacher; no assistance was available for Primary Correspondence School pupils. Consequently, 2 itinerant remedial teachers with a mobile resources unit were provided, and visited each of 11 schools every 5 (1978) or 3 (1979) weeks to: (1) identify students with learning difficulties; (2) develop and implement programs for remediation; (3) assist teachers by serving as resource persons in classrooms, program development, and recommending resources for exceptional learners. The service was generally successful; reading ability improved for 6 of 12 Year 3 pupils. Reactions to the program were positive; principals suggested more frequent visits would be beneficial. About 15-20% of parents contacted the remedial teacher regularly; greater involvement of parents was recommended. (AW)

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PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA PROGRAM

PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA PROGRAM EVALUATION SERIES: REPORT NO. 6

The Mobile Remedial Unit in South-West Queensland

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March 1980

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Disadvantaged Schools Program

1.1 In its first triennial report (June 1975) for the years 1976–78, the Schools Commission devoted a chapter to country education, and recommended the allocation of $6.1m in 1977 for a new element in the Disadvantaged Schools Program for disadvantaged country areas. In its successive reports the Commission has reiterated that country children, as a group, are educationally disadvantaged. Factors contributing to the educational disadvantage of children living in country areas include not only geographical isolation, but also those associated with the area, its community and school. Among these are economic factors, social and cultural isolation, declining and limited employment opportunities, rapid turnover of teachers (who are often young and comparatively inexperienced), the lack of adequate specialist services, and restricted subject choices at the secondary level. Funds made available in the Disadvantaged Schools Program are designed, therefore, to improve educational provision, experiences and opportunities for children living in country areas.

1.2 The term Priority Country Area is used in Queensland to describe the country areas that were identified in terms of the indicators of disadvantage referred to by the Schools Commission in its report (June 1975) and so declared by the Commonwealth Minister for Education in terms of 'The States Grants (Schools Assistance) Act, 1976'. At the time of writing this report (October 1979), one area in south-western Queensland and another in central Queensland were declared Priority Country Areas (see Figure 1). A committee consisting of representatives from the State and non-State school systems and from community organisations was set up early in 1977 to administer the Priority Country Area Program in Queensland; and towards the end of the same year this Committee appointed an Evaluation Committee charged with an on-going evaluation of the various elements, activities and initiatives undertaken.

Purpose of this Report

1.3 This report of the Mobile Remedial Unit operating in South-West Queensland is one of a series of reports and evaluations of the various projects currently provided by the State Committee Priority Country Area Program (P.C.A.P.) and funded by the Schools Commission. It aims to describe in some detail the functioning of this particular service since its commencement in 1977, to consider its effectiveness, to note the issues, concerns and constraints as they appear to the writer and to make some recommendations concerning service provision and delivery in view of the investigation carried out.

Data Sources

1.4 Data for the report were obtained by spending two weeks in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area visiting 10 schools and discussing with principals and teachers the programs being implemented, through discussions with professional staff of the South-Western Education Region, the P.C.A.P. Director at Charleville, the two remedial teachers appointed, and by a study of the relevant P.C.A.P. files in the Charleville and Brisbane P.C.A.P. offices. During the fortnight spent in the area, one week was spent in travelling with the teacher attached to the Mobile Unit, visiting five schools with him and seeing the operation of the service at first hand.

CHAPTER 2

THE SOUTH-WEST PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA

Location

2.1 The South-West Queensland Priority Country Area was the first area declared by the Minister in Queensland. Its boundaries, (as well as those of the Central P.C.A.P. Area), are indicated on the map (see Figure 1). The South-West P.C.A.P. Area encompasses nine local authority areas – eight shires and one town. These include the Shires of Balonne, Booringa, Bulloo, Bungil, Murweh, Paroo, Quilpie, Waroo and the town of Roma. When the Central P.C.A.P. Area was declared one of the shires in this area, Tambo, an area more closely linked in terms of access and services to the south-western part of the State, was incorporated for administrative and service delivery purposes in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area.

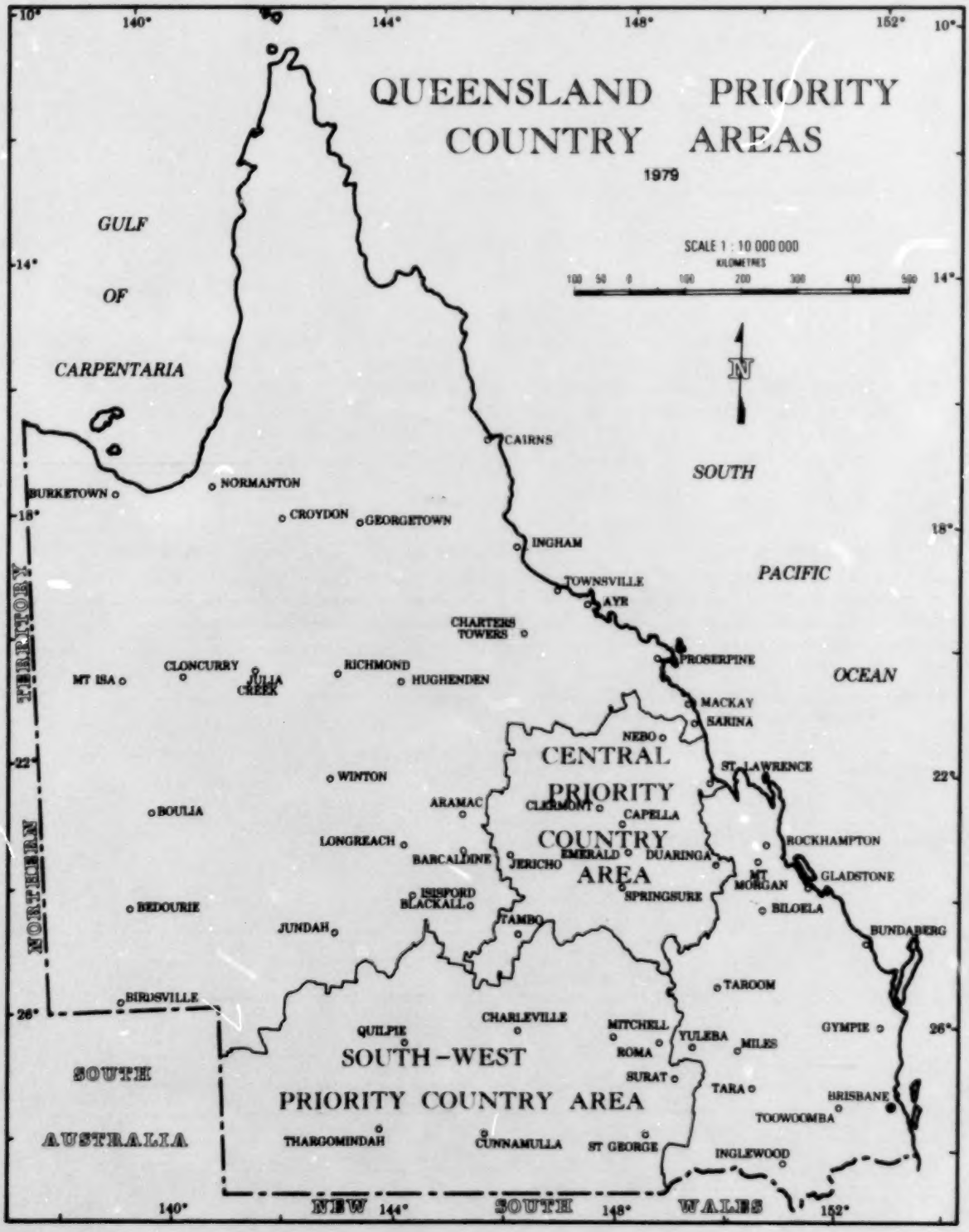
Population and Extent

2.2 The Area, defined in terms of the nine local authority areas and Tambo Shire, contains a total population of 27 343 (1976 census). This represents a population decline in the inter-censal period (1971–1976) of 9.3 per cent. Population data are set out in Table 1, which also gives the area of each of the local authorities included in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area.

Table 1: Shires, Urban Centres and Bounded Localities – South-West Priority Country Area, Queensland – with 200 or more Persons (1976 census)

Shire or Town	Area Sq. km	Service Centres	Population	
			Centre	Shire
Balonne	31 119	Dirranbandi St George	587 2176	4580
Booringa	27 793	Mitchell	1283	2300
Bulloo	73 620	Thargomindah	<200	521
Bungil	13 302	Injune	413	2111
Murweh	43 905	Augathella Charleville Morven	522 3948 237	5585
Paroo	47 617	Cunnanulla	1805	3021
Quilpie	67 482	Quilpie	728	1440
Roma (Town)	78	Roma	5898	5898
Tambo	10 308	Tambo	424	668
Waroo	13 660	Surat	503	1219
Total	328 884	–	–	27 343
			1971 Census	30142 Decline 9.3%

FIGURE 1


QUEENSLAND PRIORITY COUNTRY AREAS
1979
SCALE 1 : 10 000 000
KILOMETRES
100 50 0 100 200 300 400 500
N
GULF OF CARPENTARIA
SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN
NORTHERN TERRITORY
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NEW SOUTH WALES
CENTRAL PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
SOUTH-WEST PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
CAIRNS
NORMANTON
BURKETOWN
CROYDON
GEORGETOWN
INGHAM
TOWNSVILLE
AYR
CHARTERS TOWERS
PROSERPINE
MACKAY
SARINA
NEBO
ST LAWRENCE
CLONCURRY
JULIA CREEK
MT ISA
RICHMOND
HUGHENDEN
WINTON
BOULIA
ARAMAC
CLERMONT
CAPELLA
LONGREACH
BARCALDINE
JERICHO
EMERALD
DUARINGA
ROCKHAMPTON
MT MORGAN
GLADSTONE
SPRINGSURE
ISISFORD
BLACKALL
BEDOURIE
BILOELA
JUNDAH
TAMBO
BUNDABERG
TAROOM
BIRDSVILLE
CHARLEVILLE
MITCHELL
YULEBA
MILES
GYMPIE
QUILPIE
ROMA
SURAT
TARA
BRISBANE
TOOWOOMBA
THARGOMINDAH
CUNNAMULLA
ST GEORGE
INGLEWOOD
10°
14°
18°
22°
26°
140°
144°
148°
152°

4

2.3 Table 1 reveals that there are 12 service centres in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area with populations of over two hundred. Thargomindah, which is the service centre for Bulloo Shire and also its administrative centre, has fewer than 200 persons. The total population of 27 343 in this P.C.A.P. Area represents 1.3 per cent of the Queensland population (2 037 197 people). The Area defined in terms of the 10 local authority areas contains about 330 000 square kilometres which constitute about 19 per cent of the total area of the State (1 728 000 square kilometres). It has an average population density of less than one person (0.083) per square kilometre compared with a State population density of 1.17 persons per square kilometre.

2.4 In his report of December 1977 Connell[1], Chairman of the Committee to Administer Joint Programs in Priority Country Areas stated:

> *The South-West Priority Country Area was selected mainly because of the social isolation of many of its centres arising out of the vast distances which exist between towns in that part of the State. In addition the area was undergoing economic difficulties because of the depressed nature of its rural industries and this was resulting in a negative growth rate in population.*

2.5 The population decline in the area was mentioned in paragraph 2.2. The location of the service centres in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area are set out in Figure 2. Some idea of distances between the 13 service centres listed in Table 1 can be obtained from Figure 3.

Educational Provision

2.6 The current educational provision in terms of pre-schools and child care centres, primary and secondary schools (both State and non-State) and enrolments is detailed in Table 2.

2.7 Excluding the pre-school and child care centres, Table 3 reveals that there are 38 schools in the Area, with the main educational provision being made by the State government. Of these 38 schools, 30 are provided by the State system and eight by the Catholic system, there being two secondary Catholic schools, and six primary Catholic schools.

2.8 It will be noted also from Table 3 that Bulloo Shire has five secondary students and Quilpie Shire one secondary student. These are local students whose parents, for various reasons, have not sent them away to boarding schools. As the number of secondary students in these centres does not warrant special provision for them, they attend the local State primary school where they are enrolled with the Secondary Correspondence School from which they receive papers. The principal of the local primary school supervises the working of papers and assists students when and where possible.

---

1 C. Connell, Priority Country Area Program Report, December 1977, page 3.

Table 2: Local Authority Areas – South-West Priority Country Area, Queensland – Pre-school, and Child Care Centres and Schools with Enrolments 1.8.78 (Australian Bureau of Statistics)

Item	Balonne	Booringa	Bulloo	Bungil	Murweh	Paroo	Quilpie	Roma (town)	Tambo	Waroo	Total
Pre-school & Child Care Centres	5	1	1	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	19
Enrolment	157	32	10	24	77	32	40	104	19	36	531
Schools											
State	6	3	1	4	4	3	2	3	1	3	30
Non-State	1	1	–	–	2	1	1	2	–	0	8
Primary Students											
State	636	237	60	181	540	343	77	822	94	167	3147
Non-State	182	82	–	–	234	125	72	262	–	–	957
Secondary Students											
State	261	101	5	45	319	110	1	463	31	48	1374
Non-State	–	–	–	–	43	–	–	101	–	–	144
Total											
Pre-schools & Schools	12	5	2	6	9	5	5	6	2	5	57
Enrolment	1226	452	66	247	1213	610	190	1752	144	251	6150

2.9 All other shires in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area have secondary education facilities, but these are limited as only three of the 13 centres offer courses to Year 12 level.

Correspondence Schools

2.10 In addition to the number of children enrolled at the various schools in the local authority areas listed in Table 3, there are other children, who, because of geographic isolation or for other reasons, are unable to attend any school and are enrolled either with the Primary Correspondence School or the Secondary Correspondence School. Children so enrolled for third term in 1979 numbered about 230 with the Primary Correspondence School, and about 35 with the Secondary Correspondence School. Of the number of children enrolled with Primary Correspondence School, about 150 were also enrolled with the Charleville School of the Air and received supplementary programs from that base.

Other Educational Provision

2.11 In 1977, when funds were made available through the Schools Commission, the P.C.A.P. State Committee introduced special activities and initiatives to compensate for the educational disadvantages experienced by children, teachers and the local communities in the South-West and Central P.C.A.P. Areas. In the South-West P.C.A.P. Area these include the following:

FIGURE 6

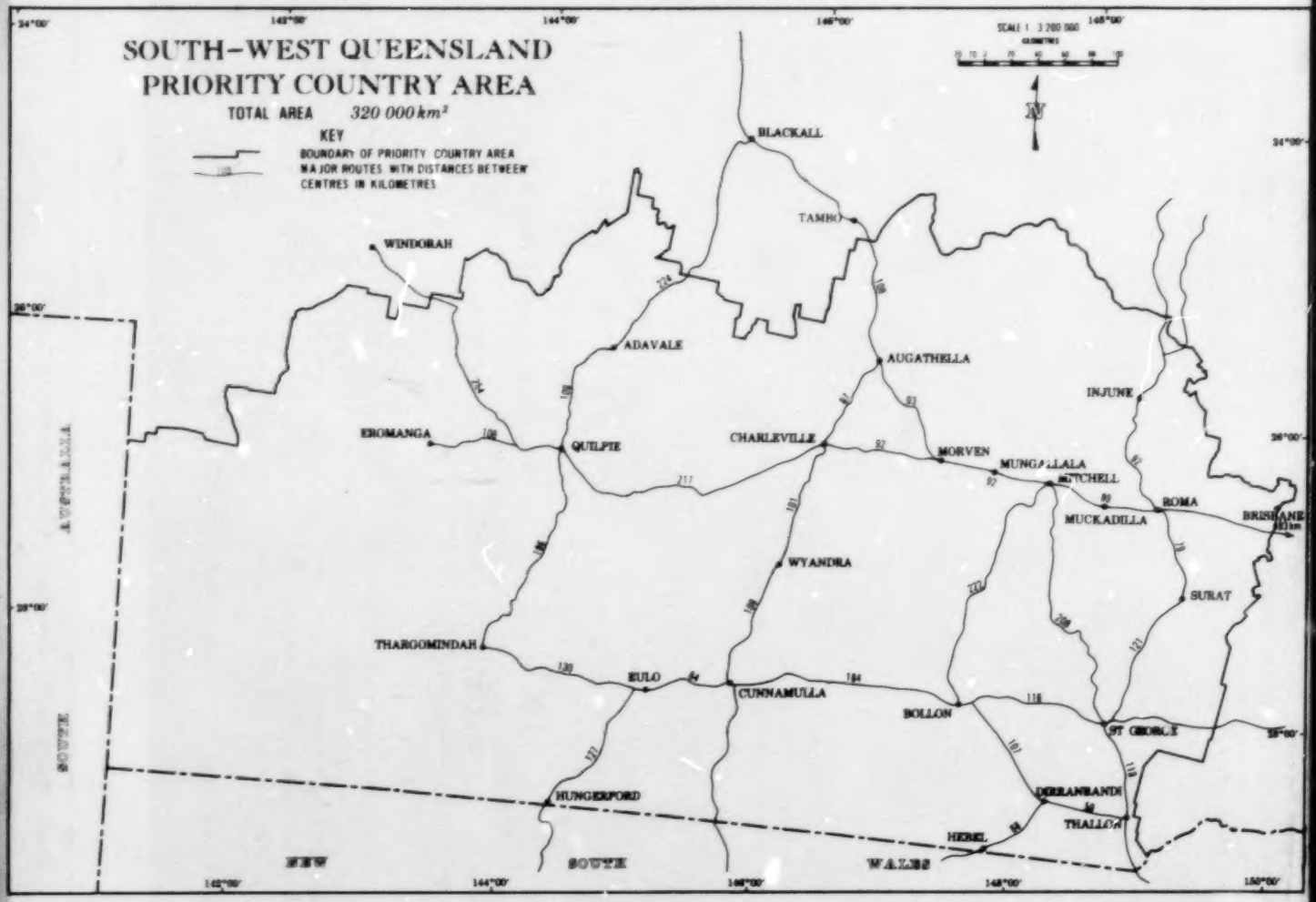
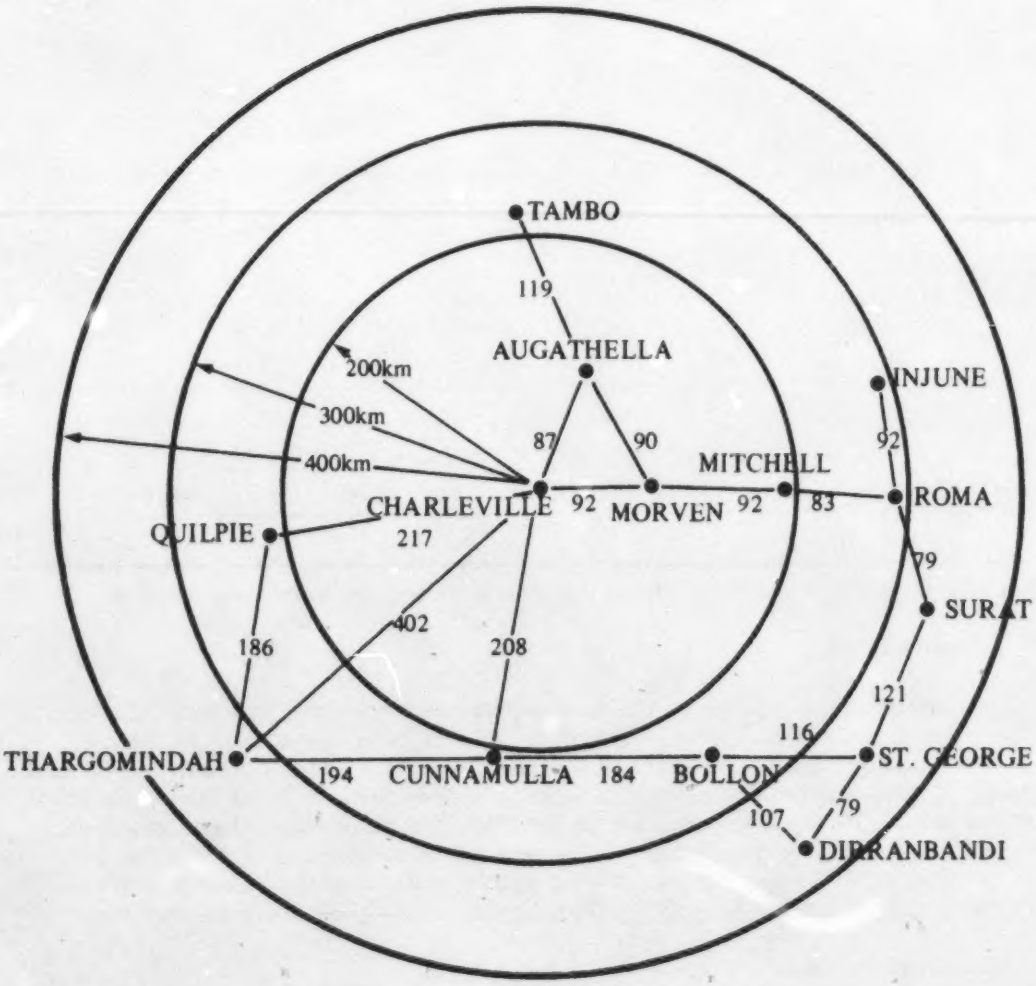

SOUTH-WEST QUEENSLAND
PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
TOTAL AREA 320 000 km²
KEY
BOUNDARY OF PRIORITY COUNTRY AREA
MAJOR ROUTES WITH DISTANCES BETWEEN CENTRES IN KILOMETRES
SCALE 1 : 3 200 000
KILOMETRES
N
BLACKALL
TAMBO
WINDORAH
ADAVALE
AUGATHELLA
INJUNE
EROMANGA
QUILPIE
CHARLEVILLE
MORVEN
MUNGALLALA
MITCHELL
ROMA
BRISBANE
MUCKADILLA
WYANDRA
SURAT
THARGOMINDAH
EULO
CUNNAMULLA
BOLLON
ST GEORGE
DIRRANBANDI
THALLON
HUNGERFORD
HEBEL
NEW SOUTH WALES
24°00'
26°00'
28°00'
30°00'
142°00'
144°00'
146°00'
148°00'
150°00'

FIGURE 3
DISTANCES BETWEEN SERVICE CENTRES,
SOUTH-WEST P.C.A.P. AREA, QUEENSLAND



- Primary Itinerant Teacher Service
- Secondary Itinerant Teacher Service
- Mobile Remedial Unit
- mobile manual arts workshop
- Roctapus – video-tape programs
- cultural activities, excursions, vacation schools
- provision of buses
- audio-visual equipment maintenance service
- library – updating
- instrumental music teaching
- vocational guidance materials
- special support services.

Separate reports or profiles on each of these initiatives have been written or are in the course of being written.

CHAPTER 3

THE MOBILE REMEDIAL UNIT

Remedial and Resource Teachers, Queensland

3.1 While it is accepted that a substantial number of children with a learning disability can be educated within the regular classroom setting by appropriate variations to school and class organisation to facilitate individualised instruction, it is often necessary, for a variety of reasons, to provide special remedial assistance for a child with a moderate or even a mild degree of educational retardation. In some cases in Queensland children are programmed for remedial assistance in a withdrawal situation under the direction of a remedial teacher; in other cases support and assistance are provided by the services of a resource teacher.

3.2 Selection of children for assistance by a remedial teacher is the responsibility of the primary guidance officer. Contingent upon parental approval such children then receive intensive sessional teaching (usually two sessions each of one-and-a-half hours per week) from the remedial teacher. Remedial centres were established in larger primary schools, and there were more than 180 remedial teachers operating in 1979. Remedial teachers serve children in the school where they are based as well as children from neighbouring schools, working with the children either individually or in small groups according to the nature and severity of the disability.

3.3 Resource teachers function somewhat differently from remedial teachers. Their role is more flexible. They are generalists in special education and are concerned with a wide range of general and specific educational difficulties. The resource teacher may assist some children in a withdrawal situation. Well equipped learning centres containing resource materials are available for the purpose. The learning centre is also a production centre for learning materials designed and developed co-operatively by the resource teacher and the classroom teacher. Alternatively, the resource teacher may assist children in the classroom situation through co-operative teaching or by group teaching.

3.4 Both remedial and resource teachers have undertaken special additional training in diagnosis of learning difficulties and teaching strategies. They provide a variety of services to parents and teachers – advice, program design and development, individual teaching for children if/when required.

The Concept

3.5 In 1979 there were more than 250 remedial and resource teachers in Queensland. In the South-West P.C.A.P. Area in 1977 there were three remedial teachers – one based at Cunnamulla, one at Charleville, and the third at Roma. Since 1977 an additional remedial teacher was appointed to Cunnamulla and another to St George making a total of five remedial teachers serving a primary school enrolment in the Area of more than four thousand. Because of the distances (already referred to) between centres in this Area, children with a learning disability in those centres adjacent to that where the remedial teacher was stationed could not be adequately helped. This meant, in effect, that of the 38 primary schools only nine had access to a remedial teacher if it were required. The remaining 29 schools scattered throughout the area, with more than 2000 pupils, had no such access. Moreover, children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School and who had a learning disability did not have direct assistance available from a remedial teacher. There was need to provide a service for these isolated children who had learning disabilities.

Plan and Implementation

3.6 The P.C.A.P. Committee therefore proposed to meet this need by providing a team of two itinerant remedial teachers together with a mobile resources unit. The teachers' role was to include: (a) the identification of students experiencing learning difficulties; (b) the development and implementation of appropriate programs of remediation for such children; and (c) providing assistance to teachers in a variety of ways as a resource person in the classroom, in program development, in informing teachers of and recommending suitable resource materials for the exceptional learner. It was also envisaged that the remedial teachers would establish liaison with the Isolated Children's Special Education Unit (I.C.S.E.U.), which was established by the Queensland Department of Education in 1976, through referral of children in need of assistance, assisting in the implementation of the programs developed by the I.C.S.E.U. and keeping it informed of the outcomes of such programs.

3.7 Associated with the proposal and constituting part of the service provision was the supply of resource materials for the two remedial teachers (one State and one non-State teacher) in Cunnamulla; and the employment of two teacher aides on temporary conditions of service by the Catholic Education Office on behalf of the P.C.A.P. State Committee. It was not proposed therefore that Cunnamulla should be included in the itinerant service.

3.8 The itinerant service commenced operations in September 1977 using Charleville as a base with a staff of two remedial teachers made available from the Division of Special Education within the Queensland State Department of Education. Early in 1978 the mobile resource unit was supplied and came into use.

CHAPTER 4

THE SERVICE

Overview

4.1 The Mobile Remedial Unit, a pilot scheme to provide access for country pupils and teachers to remedial help, commenced operations in third term in 1977, with two remedial teachers using either P.C.A.P. vehicles, when they were available for the purpose, or their own private vehicles at other times. By first term 1978 the Mobile Unit (a small commercial bus vehicle modified for use as a mobile remedial/resource van), equipped with teaching aids and resources, came into use. In 1977 and 1978 Charleville was used as a base for the service: both teachers used the Mobile Unit for service delivery and worked as a team. In 1979, one teacher was attached to the Mobile Unit and based at St George, while the second teacher remained at the Charleville base acting as an outreach teacher for the I.C.S.E.U. and developing a service which included some additional schools not previously serviced. At the end of 1979 the service was suspended mainly because of the unavailability of the specialist teachers who staffed it, resulting from the overall staffing position within the Department of Education and within Special Education in particular. A brief description of the service in 1977, 1978 and 1979 follows.

The Service in 1977 and 1978

4.2 With the appointment of two remedial teachers to the service from the beginning of third term 1977 the service began in September of that year. During third term audio-visual equipment, diagnostic and testing materials and resources were also provided. The initial phase of the service was to undertake the testing of children referred by the schools. District guidance officers at Roma and Toowoomba were both involved in this and subsequent stages of the project in an advisory and consultative role. During this stage a total of 24 schools were visited. At each school the students referred by the principal after discussions with teachers were tested, their results tabulated for school records, and programs of remediation suggested. Some 250 children of those referred and tested, in a total enrolment of more than 2200 children, were found to be in need of some form of remedial assistance. Eleven schools and 120 children in the Charleville/ Roma area were selected as a result of the survey and a service was established in this area as a pilot scheme. It involved regular visits, remedial programs, continuing re-assessment and follow-up work. The pilot scheme was a realistic approach in view of the number of schools and children requiring some program of remediation. This service was terminated at the end of second term 1978 and a new service for the benefit of 104 children in 11 schools in the Surat/St George/Dirranbandi area was initiated with the same kind of approach to the program as that developed for the first (pilot) area. The two teachers based at Charleville and travelling in the Mobile Remedial Unit provided the service.

The Service in 1979

4.3 From the beginning of 1979 one teacher using the van unit was stationed at St George and continued to service the schools in that area, while the second teacher, based at Charleville, functioned as an outreach teacher for the I.C.S.E.U. in Brisbane as well as a remedial teacher, servicing some of the schools in the original pilot group of 1977/78 and some other more remote schools in the Charleville/Quilpie/Cunnamulla area. A more detailed description of the various elements in the service follows.

Purpose of Service

4.4 The purpose of the service was to meet the urgent and specific needs of some children and schools in the area – needs that were confirmed as a result of the survey conducted prior to the implementation of the service. It was envisaged that the remedial teacher's function would be:

(a) to provide individualised instruction of an intensive sessional kind where the situation demanded it;

(b) to teach in a co-operative capacity as a member of the school's teaching team if required and the situation warranted it;

(c) to survey the school's resources and indicate to teachers ways and means of making better use of existing equipment, aids and materials, and if necessary, to make recommendations regarding resources for the school; and

(d) to act as a resource person and consultant in the school where the remedial teacher's services in these capacities were sought by the principal or by members of the school staff.

The Vehicle

4.5 As preliminary enquiries of the schools in the area revealed that only a few schools had suitable classroom accommodation for the remedial teacher, it was decided by P.C.A.P. to provide a vehicle. The vehicle that was provided was planned as a multi-purpose vehicle to cater for the two remedial teachers; for use by a speech therapist to enable her to make regular planned visits of two weeks duration to the area once a term, and for use by a secondary resource teacher. It was also envisaged that it would be used for transport of small groups of children for week-end excursions, and for school camps, and as a resource unit for mini-school programs. Seating and table (work area) accommodation for 14 were provided, so that the van could be used for individual and small group teaching and testing as required. It had storage facilities for the resource materials and audio-visual equipment. Resources, materials and equipment costing in excess of $9000 were provided.

4.6 Unfortunately, the vehicle was not air-conditioned nor was it dust proof. These omissions resulted in very uncomfortable travelling and working conditions for the teachers who spent an average of between 10 and 14 hours a week driving, greatly affected the resources and audio-visual equipment stored in the vehicle, and involved the teachers in a lot of dusting and cleaning of equipment, materials, and of the van itself before each teaching session.

Strategies Adopted

4.7 The teachers used a diagnostic-prescriptive approach. At each school all children with problems in reading were comprehensively tested (if they had not already been tested by officers from the Special Education Division) and from these results individual profiles were constructed and discussed with teachers and some programs of remedial work utilising available resources in the school were suggested. This assessment and testing program took more than one school term to complete, and included a number of children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School who were referred by the itinerant teachers or by teachers from the School of the Air or from the Primary Correspondence School.

4.8 On their visits to the schools for remedial work, the teachers worked in a variety of ways. However, withdrawing children for individual assistance or for small group work was the technique most usually adopted for those children needing intensive sessional remediation. In 1977 and 1978 the remedial teachers concentrated on the area of language arts almost exclusively. Some children were assisted with mathematics. Any children with speech problems were referred to the P.C.A.P. speech therapist attached to the I.C.S.E.U. in Brisbane who prepared a program for implementation by parents or by the school.

4.9 In general, all children requiring intensive help were taken by the remedial teachers when they visited the schools. Children in Years 2, 3 and 4 were given priority. For those children with minor learning difficulties and, usually for children in Years 5 to 7, programs of assistance were developed after consultation and in conjunction with the classroom teacher who then implemented the program. Regular review of the progress of such programs and individual assessment of these pupils were carried out by the remedial teachers. In the development and implementation of a program in reading by the classroom teacher, the remedial teacher adopted the following procedure to assist: (a) selection and recommendation of appropriate reading scheme; (b) discussion; (c) provision of reading books, workbooks and other relevant resource materials; (d) development and production with the teacher of any specific teaching aids or learning materials required such as flash cards and games; and (e) demonstration lesson using the reading books and resources. About 50 per cent of children in need of assistance were catered for through such programs. The others were provided for by withdrawal and individualised assistance.

4.10 In one school visited by the writer, the general approach and service delivery were different. The principal in this school used the remedial teacher almost exclusively as a resource person and as an in-service educator for the benefit of himself, his staff and pupils. In this school the remedial teacher worked co-operatively with classroom teachers in the classroom situation, developed remedial programs with them, suggested and demonstrated teaching strategies, and advised and assisted in the production of suitable teaching aids and materials. The principal said that he was very conscious of the fact that the current remedial service being provided by P.C.A.P. was a pilot scheme and was anxious that he and the other teachers on staff should endeavour to develop the necessary skills and strategies for classroom management and remediation of learning difficulties wherever possible.

Service Delivery Model – 1978

4.11 Following the survey of needs a regular timetable of visits was planned and, during 1978, it followed a five-week cycle consisting of four weeks in the field and one week at the Charleville (base) office. Details concerning one such five-week schedule are set out in Table 3. The schedule of visits illustrated in Table 3 was followed for the whole of 1978 on both circuits in the two areas serviced. Travelling took much time. For example, from the base at Charleville on Monday to the operation's base for the week at Injune was about five hours either going by the most direct route (312 kilometres) of which more than 100 kilometres were gravel road, or by the longer (sealed) road of 365 km. (The vehicle was a comparatively slow one and, in the opinion of the writer, underpowered.) On the second circuit travelling time from Charleville base to the St George operations base (395 km) was about the same. Much of the travelling was done before and/or after school time and together with the work performed by the teachers, made the schedule quite onerous and physically demanding. This affected the amount of service that could be provided and to a degree its quality.

Table 3: Timetable of Visits of P.C.A.P. Mobile Remedial Unit (Charleville Based) from 3.4.78 to 5.5.78

Week Beginning	School	Day of Visit and Teacher	Number of Pupils
3.4.78	Mungallala	Teacher A: Mon., Tues., Wed. Teacher B: Wednesday	12
	Morven	Teacher B: Mon. & Tues.	3
	Muckadilla	Teacher A) Teacher B): Thursday	2
	Amby	Teacher A) Teacher B): Friday	6
10.4.78	Mitchell		
	(a) State School	Both teachers	33
	(b) Convent	Monday to Friday	9
17.4.78	Augathella		
	(a) State School	Both teachers	11
	(b) Convent	Monday to Friday	21
24.4.78	Injune	Teacher A: Monday to Friday Teacher B: Monday, Tuesday & Friday	14
	Arcadia Valley	Teacher B: Wednesday	2
	Bymount East	Teacher B: Thursday	2
1.5.78	–	Week in Office	

4.12 Pupil-contact time while the remedial teachers were in the school was high for those children receiving individual programs, but it occurred only once every five weeks. In the interim, support for these children had to be provided by class teachers using programs devised and developed by the remedial teacher and left with the class teacher for the purpose. There was a fairly wide range in the extent of implementation and in the outcomes of such programs. These conditions also applied to the 1979 service delivery model although time between visits was reduced.

Service Delivery, 1979

4.13 From the beginning of 1979, the Remedial Unit was stationed at St George and one remedial teacher used St George as a base with office accommodation available at the St George State School. The Principal also made available typing and teacher aide assistance when required. The timetable of visits was also changed to a weekly arrangement whereby four days were spent in the field and one day at the base school. This change reduced the time between visits to schools, reduced travelling time considerably for the teacher and increased the amount of contact time between remedial teacher and classroom teacher, and between remedial teacher and pupil. The timetable of visits of the remedial teacher for a five-week period in October-November, 1979 is set out in Table 4.

Table 4: Timetable of Visits of P.C.A.P. Remedial/Resource Unit (St George Based) from 1.10.79 to 2.11.79

Week Beginning	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.10.79	Bollon	Thallon	Dirranbandi	Dirranbandi	Office (St George)
8.10.79	Wycombe	Surat	Surat	Convent (St George)	Office (St George)
15.10.79	Dirranbandi	Dirranbandi	Dirranbandi	Convent (St George)	Office (St George)
22.10.79	Bollon	Bollon	Thallon	Convent (St George)	Office (St George)
29.10.79	Begonia and Dunkeld	Yuleba Ck and Surat	Surat	Convent (St George)	Office (St George)

4.14 The revised schedule of visits provided for an average of between two and three weeks between visits. St Patrick's Convent at St George was given a very good service receiving a visit one day a week for 10 weeks out of the 15 weeks that the remedial teacher was in the field. The St George State School was not part of this service as a full-time remedial teacher was appointed to the school in third term of 1978. There was a very close professional relationship, mutual support and assistance between this teacher and the teacher attached to the Remedial/Resources Mobile Unit. Table 5 gives some indication of the time spent by the remedial teacher in various activities as estimated by himself on a five-point scale. Column 1 records the estimate of time actually spent in this way, and column 2 the amount of time the teacher would prefer to use in the various activities

Table 5: Remedial Teacher's Estimate of Time Spent in Various Activities (St George Based) in 1979

5 = a great deal of time; 4 = a large amount of time; 3 = some time; 2 = very little time; 1 = no time.

Activity			Actual Time	Preferred Time
1.	Preparing/developing new materials/programs for self		2	3
2.	Preparing/developing new materials/programs for use by teachers		4	4
3.	Providing individual instruction and help – withdrawal		5	5
4.	Consulting class teachers		3	5
5.	Working with children in the regular classroom		2	3
6.	Providing group help and/or instruction – withdrawal		3	3
7.	Helping children with reading/comprehension/language arts		5	5
8.	Helping children with mathematical skills		1½	4
9.	Consultation:	(i) with guidance officers	3	4
		(ii) with collegue (e.g. St George)	3	3
		(iii) with principal	3	3
		(iv) any other – doctors, speech therapist, etc.	3	3
		(v) parents	2	5
10.	Demonstrations for class teacher (of strategies) in classrooms		3	3
11.	Informing class teachers re progress of children helped		4	4
12.	Writing reports re children helped		3	3
13.	Attending meetings/seminars etc. for professional development		2	3
14.	Conducting meetings/seminars for professional development of others		2	4
15.	Carrying out clerical/administrative jobs		2½	2½
16.	Providing activities for gifted children		1	3

4.15 Table 5 reveals that the teacher spent a great deal of time providing individual help and instruction in a withdrawal situation, and that he would like to continue to do so. Very little time was spent in the classroom either teaching in a co-operative situation with the classroom teacher or working with a small group of children. A large amount of time, however, was spent helping teachers by preparing and developing new materials or programs for them, and in informing classroom teachers of pupils' progress. Very little time was spent in consultation with the parents.

New Service Model

4.16 From the beginning of 1979 a new element was introduced into the service. The second remedial teacher was no longer attached to the Mobile Unit, but worked from Charleville as base in the dual capacity of an outreach teacher or field officer for the I.C.S.E.U. and as an itinerant remedial teacher.

The Isolated Children's Special Education Unit and P.C.A.P.

4.17 In October 1976 the State Minister for Education announced the establishment of the I.C.S.E.U. to assist isolated children with learning difficulties. These children were beyond the reach of the existing facilities provided by the Special Education Division and were either pupils enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School or enrolled in small remote primary schools.

4.18 In 1977 the P.C.A.P. Committee combined with the I.C.S.E.U. in a number of projects. It approved funding for the appointment of four additional members of staff – a librarian, a speech therapist, a general assistant and a teacher aide – to work with I.C.S.E.U. staff on the following:

(a) a cataloguing and retrieval system for materials related to special education;

(b) the development of articulation programs by the Speech Therapist able to be used by parents at home or by the teachers in the schools;

(c) the development of tutor training kits – a teaching aid for the home supervisor; and

(d) the development of a small schools program designed to help teachers who had pupils in need of Special Education services but had no access to such assistance.

4.19 The I.C.S.E.U. faced a difficult task in relation to (d) above, where the child identified as in need of assistance would have been eligible for admission to a special school. The major difficulties facing the I.C.S.E.U. in trying to provide for such children were: (a) a long-term involvement was mandatory as the children would undoubtedly need alternative individual programs throughout their schooling; (b) an inability to provide any direct teaching; and (c) the number of children needing assistance of some kind. For example, in the years 1977 and 1978 the number of children in the whole of Queensland referred to and assisted by the I.C.S.E.U. were 78 and 123 respectively. The 123 assisted in 1978 included 105 new referrals, 89 of whom were assisted by the I.C.S.E.U. in some way, and 34 children from the previous year who continued to receive support.

4.20 The I.C.S.E.U. provides different levels of service – categories of intervention – according to the needs of the child and the availability of helpers for the child (teacher, parent, home supervisor). These categories of intervention were summarised by the teacher-in-charge of the I.C.S.E.U. as follows:

Levels of Intervention

Category A: Referral to more appropriate agency, e.g. visiting teachers for sick child, migrant education for migrant child;

Category B: Report to teacher and parents and offer general advice, e.g. 'Keep up the good work', 'More reading in content etc.', 'Suggest further contact with Unit if child appears to need additional help';

Category C: Support to school by way of suggested alternative curriculum and supporting materials, e.g. program for the developmentally slow learner recommended by guidance officer after psychometric assessment. (This has to be approved by the District Inspector before implementation.)

or

Support to school by way of suggestions re techniques and materials – involvement to continue as long as necessary;

Category D: Program individually designed for child to be administered within school – detailed program and materials supplied on regular basis; and

Category E: Unit takes over main teaching role in one or more curriculum areas for limited time. Tapes, materials, books etc. supplied to child with support material for teacher and mother e.g. Primary Correspondence School child with severe educational handicap.

It was considered by the P.C.A.P. State Committee that a remedial teacher based at Charleville and acting as an outreach teacher for the I.C.S.E.U. would provide an additional necessary and valuable Special Education service for those children needing support and who were enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School and/or the small primary schools in the Charleville district of the South-West P.C.A.P. Area.

The Outreach Teacher Role

4.21 As envisaged by the I.C.S.E.U. and P.C.A.P. State Committee the role of such an outreach teacher would be as detailed below:

(a) to identify children who were in need of I.C.S.E.U. support and fitted its model of intervention;

(b) field teacher for I.C.S.E.U. providing a service delivery for children referred by I.C.S.E.U. in the P.C.A.P. area;

(c) to evaluate materials and programs provided by I.C.S.E.U.; and

(d) to make recommendations regarding service provision and delivery to the I.C.S.E.U.

4.22 In addition to his role as outreach teacher, it was decided that the remedial teacher would also continue the role of remedial teacher for some selected schools in the Charleville area, some of which had been serviced in 1978, and some others which had not been previously involved in the program and were in need of assistance. Those children with severe learning disabilities were to be helped. The dual role for the remedial teacher was a limited but a practical solution to meeting local needs. In 1978 the number of children in the whole State who received intensive, individual programs in all major curriculum areas from the I.C.S.E.U. numbered only 10 or about eight per cent of the total number assisted. Only two of these children were domiciled in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area. These two as well as 19 other children identified as needing intensive individualised assistance were provided for in the 1979 service by the remedial teacher based at Charleville.

4.23 These 19 children came from 11 schools. Four were enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School. Correspondence children were assisted either at home (2) or at the nearest school if convenient (2). The schedule of visits for October 1979 is set out in Table 6.

Table 6: Timetable of Visits of P.C.A.P. Remedial Teacher (Charleville Based) in October 1979

Week Beginning	School/Property Visited				
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1.10.79	Thargomindah (S.S.)	Thargomindah (S.S.)	Wyandra (S.S. & Primary Correspondence School [P.C.S.] child)	Wyandra (S.S. & P.C.S.)	Office
8.10.79	Cowley (Station) P.C.S.	Quilpie (Convent)	Quilpie (Convent) Monler (Station) P.C.S.	Monler (Station) P.C.S.	Office
15.10.79	Office	Mitchell (S.S. & Convent)	Morven (S.S.)	Morven (S.S.)	Morven (S.S.)
22.10.79	Wyandra (S.S. & 1 P.C.S. child)	Wyandra (S.S. & 1 P.C.S. child)	Thargomindah (S.S.)	Thargomindah (S.S.)	Thargomindah (S.S.)
29.10.79	Morven (S.S.)	Mitchell (Convent & S.S.)	Mungallala (S.S.)	Morven (S.S.)	Office

4.24 Two children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School were receiving a complete alternate program designed by the I.C.S.E.U. in all major curriculum areas. Two other children enrolled in a small one-teacher school were also receiving special I.C.S.E.U. programs together with the necessary resources for implementation by the principal. These four children as well as the children from station properties or the schools visited received intensive, sessional assistance from the remedial teacher. Most were assisted in the area of language arts, but one was helped in the area of mathematics and one in speech using an articulation program designed by the P.C.A.P. speech therapist attached to the I.C.S.E.U.

4.25 An analysis of the distribution of the remedial teacher's time is set out in Table 7.

Table 7: Distribution of Remedial Teacher's Time (Charleville Based) in Third Term, 1979

Activity	No. of Hours	% of Total Hours Worked (484)
Remedial teaching:		
Intensive sessional Individualised Instruction	225	46
Resource person:		
(a) Assisting with mini-schools	39	8
(b) Advising/assisting classroom teachers	34	7
Liaison:		
(a) I.C.S.E.U.		
(b) Regional Guidance Office	25	5
Office:		
Administration Preparation	75	15
Travelling	86	18

4.26 From Table 7 it will be noted that approximately half the remedial teacher's time was spent in intensive individualised instruction. Eight per cent of the remedial teacher's time was spent in assisting with the mini-schools held in the area which were a feature of the work of the Primary Itinerant Teacher Service operating from Charleville, Cunnamulla and St George. The mini-school was introduced in 1977 and was designed to provide the children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School with opportunities for work in a classroom situation, for mixing and socialising with other children, and for participating in a wide range of experiences and activities such as art and craft, and drama, physical education and sport, which could not be satisfactorily catered for by the Primary Correspondence School. The mini-school was conducted for a week on a station property for Primary Correspondence School pupils and was also attended by mothers who, in most cases, were the home supervisors of the correspondence lessons. A number of such mini-schools would be held during the term at a different location. Attendances varied from eight-10 to more than 20 children depending on location. The remedial teacher's involvement was two-fold: (a) to assess any children referred by the itinerant teachers, School of Air, or Primary Correspondence School; and (b) to conduct a seminar for mothers attending the mini-school. The seminar program was directed at teaching strategies such as how to teach spelling, reading and word attack skills, at the study and preparation of some curriculum materials, and at meeting particular, individual needs of the mother/home supervisor.

4.27 Almost one-fifth of the remedial teacher's time was spent in travelling. Table 7 reveals that 18 per cent (86 hours) of the itinerary to be worked in the 16 weeks of third term was to be spent in travelling from base to school or station property and return to base. Thargomindah, the most distant school visited, involved a five-hour journey from Charleville as it was more than 400 kilometres away.

Itinerancy

4.28 The itinerant nature of this service as well as that of a number of other Priority Country Area Programs (e.g. Itinerant Teacher Services, Mobile Classroom) needs comment. While all itinerant teachers involved with P.C.A.P. are highly motivated with a high degree of professional commitment, itinerancy *per se* causes personal and professional hardships. There are, for example, the physical demands of travelling long distances in trying conditions (roads, climate and type of vehicle used), personal difficulties arising from frequent and sometimes daily changes of accommodation and of being away from home. There are the social hardships of not being a fully participating member of the local community where the teacher is based (activities, clubs, sport), and the lack of social contacts in centres visited. There are also professional hardships. These include: having limited contact only with the children being helped; not being able to provide the continuing emotional support such children need; not being able to get to know such children fully, thus ensuring the most effective assistance will be provided; the very limited personal and professional control the itinerant remedial teacher has over the remediation program itself, the supervision and implementation of which was, to a very marked degree, the responsibility of the classroom teacher between visits of the itinerant teacher; and the lack of contact with colleagues for discussion, mutual support and assistance.

CHAPTER 5

THE MOBILE REMEDIAL UNIT – EVALUATION

Review of Service

5.1 At the time of undertaking this investigation (October 1979) the service had been in operation for two years, and was to continue at least until the end of 1979. During that time four teachers had provided the service serving for at least one year, or at the most for 18 months. Because of the demands made on the teachers – demands inherent in the role of an itinerant – it would appear that a maximum of two years service for a teacher should not be exceeded.

5.2 In the two years of operation under review three geographic regions were serviced in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area. They were:

(a) Charleville, to the east and north;

(b) Charleville, to the west and south; and

(c) the St George area.

Service was delivered to 29 schools (State and non-State) and to two station properties approximately 250 children. The Charleville area to the east and north and the St George area each had had one full years support and the Charleville south and west area about had received 10 months assistance at the time of writing this report (November 1979). All children in schools in the area and needing help were assisted. One of the great advantages of this program was that the child with a learning problem was assisted in his own school.

5.3 In the two years of operation two service delivery models were used. The second model, with one teacher based at St George and one based at Charleville, was the more successful in terms of: (a) frequency of service for the pupils concerned, and for the classroom teachers supporting them; and (b) travelling time involved which reduced the physical demands on the teachers providing the service, reduced wear and tear on the vehicle and the resources in the Mobile Unit, and reduced operational costs of the service vehicle at St George.

Student Achievement and Response

5.4 Some indications of results achieved with 12 Year 3 pupils (six from a State school and six from a non-State school) by one of the remedial teachers, over the year in which he was helping these children and their teacher can be obtained from the following table.

Table 8: Test Results of Year 3 Pupils from State and Non-State Schools by One Remedial Teacher

Pupil	Test Results Sept. 1978				Retardation (1978)		Test Results Oct. 1979				Retardation (1979)		Change in 12 mths		Real Gain or Loss 12 mths
	C.A.		R.A.(1)		C.A.–R.A.		C.A.		R.A.(2)		C.A.–R.A.		R.A.(2) – R.A.(1)		
	Y	M	Y	M	Y	M	Y	M	Y	M	Y	M	Y	M	mths
1	6	10	5	8	1	2	7	11	7	2	0	9	1	6	+5
2	6	7	5	10	0	9	7	8	7	10	+0	2	2	0	+11
3	7	5	5	5	2	0	8	6	7	1	1	5	1	8	+7
4	7	2	6	2	1	0	8	3	7	7	0	8	1	5	+4
5	7	5	5	3	2	2	8	6	6	2	2	4	0	10	–3
6	7	4	6	11	0	5	8	5	8	0	0	5	1	1	No Change
7	7	6	5	10	1	8	8	7	8	1	0	6	2	3	+14
8	7	0	6	3	0	9	8	1	8	5	+0	4	2	2	+13
9	7	1	6	2	0	11	8	2	6	4	1	10	0	2	–11
10	6	9	6	8	1	1	7	9	6	2	1	7	0	6	–7
11	7	5	<5	3	2	2	8	6	5	8	2	10	>0	5	–8
12	7	6	<5	3	2	3	8	7	<5	3	>3	4	No measurable change		

Legend: C.A. = chronological age
R.A. = reading age
Y M = years, months

5.5 Table 8 reveals that:

(a) Six pupils showed gains in reading ability of more than one year, one month (the period of intervention program).

(b) One pupil showed a gain of exactly one year, one month.

(c) Five pupils showed gains of less than one year, one month. One child in particular showed no significant improvement in reading ability with a Reading Age (R.A.) of less than five years, 3 months.

(d) Of the six pupils referred to in (a) two pupils who commenced the program with a retardation* of nine months made considerable gains. The R.A. of these pupils at the end of the program was 2 months and 4 months greater than their Chronoiogical Age (C.A.) respectively.

(e) The results further indicate that the peripatetic services and the programs of remediation implemented will assist some of the pupils. Clearly it did not assist Pupil 12 in Table 8 at all, and had only minimal impact on three other pupils. These pupils obviously need assistance through one or other of the provisions made by the Special Education Division – Special Schools, Classes for Specific Learning Difficulty or Isolated Children's Special Education Unit.

* Retardation occurs when a child's Reading Age (R.A.) is less than the child's actual age in years i.e. the child's Chronological Age (C.A.)

5.6 Two children enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School received assistance from the Remedial teachers attached to the Mobile Unit. The establishment of a second base in 1979 and the change in the service delivery model for the Charleville-based teacher did enable provision of a service by the Charleville teacher for primary correspondence children in that area but children on primary correspondence in other areas such as St George, Roma, Mitchell, Surat could not be provided with a home-based service. Access to a school-based service was possible for only two children in 1979 because of distance to be travelled.

5.7 The Charleville-based teacher also continued to provide support for a secondary student in his first year of high school who had been assisted in Year 7. He was also assisting two adults, both with reading disabilities – one so that she could help her primary correspondence child; and one who was training to be a nurse.

Support for Classroom Teacher

5.8 A careful analysis of all results recorded by the remedial teacher indicates that in general the remedial programs were successful. Whilst the success of the teaching role of the remedial/resource teachers cannot be denied nor its importance over-estimated, it is probable that the consultancy, advisory and resource functions of the remedial teacher will be of the most significance in the whole program, and of most lasting benefit to teachers and to present and future pupils of these teachers. As a support person to the young, relatively inexperienced teachers in the area the remedial/resource teachers were responsible for an increased awareness of the problem of the child with a learning disability, that amelioration of the problem can be achieved through the development and implementation of appropriate individual programs of remediation. Through the remedial teacher the classroom teacher has become more aware of the necessary resources for such programs, of access to resources and has had a variety of teaching strategies demonstrated. The remedial teacher has thus filled a significant role of in-service educator as well. But exchange of ideas and assistance have been mutual.

5.9 Both remedial teachers, who were implementing the service at the time of the writer's visit, were quick to acknowledge that their itinerant service had also provided them both with unique opportunities for professional growth and development. While one of the teachers had seen service in a primary school for a short time, the other had served only in Special Education. Working in such a number of primary schools they said had given them new insights into school management, organisation and government, and had provided them with new perspectives on primary children's abilities. They had gained much from both the State and non-State schools they were servicing.

5.10 Invitations to attend school staff meetings that coincided with the remedial teachers' visit were a feature of the service and positive contributions were made by them. At one school (non-State) the teacher had assisted in the development of a reading policy and program for the school; at another school (State) assistance was provided in the area of spelling and the knowledge, skills and resources of the I.C.S.E.U. were drawn on for the benefit of the school, teachers, and pupils.

Support for the Service

5.11 Close liaison with and support for the four remedial teachers who were responsible for implementing the service have been provided by the Special Education Division. Arrangements were made for an Induction program which included visits to the I.C.S.E.U. and to the Primary Correspondence School. Regional Guidance Officers in the South-Western Region (Roma) and in the Darling Downs Region (Toowoomba) also provided support assistance. Individual case files were made available; advice given and recommendations made when requested; and ready access to the Regional Guidance Officer or members of his staff for diagnosis and assessment in exceptional cases was also a feature of the operation of the service and availed of by the remedial teachers. During 1979 the Regional Guidance Officer at Roma conducted a two-day seminar for remedial and resource teachers. It was attended by both of the P.C.A.P. remedial teachers and some 20 other teachers. This Seminar provided one of the rare opportunities for contact with senior officers and with colleagues and was appreciated greatly by the two P.C.A.P. itinerant remedial teachers who did not have many opportunities for professional contacts.

5.12 While no administrative constraints existed regarding personal contact by the remedial teachers with the Reading Development Centre in Brisbane, or with the R.E.A.D. Centre (Reading Education and Development Centre) in Toowoomba, no visits were made. Morever there were only limited and incidental contacts with colleagues in other centres in the P.C.A.P. Area, or in the two main regional administrative centres at Roma and Toowoomba. Opportunities for these sorts of contacts which contribute to personal and professional growth and development, are professionally stimulating,and provide professional refreshment for isolates such as the itinerant remedial teachers should be a feature of the service in the interests of the teachers themselves and of the service they are providing and should be incorporated in the program.

Reactions to the Service

5.13 Reactions to the service are on the whole positive and favourable. The pupils being assisted are enthusiastic, look forward to the visits of the remedial teachers and gladly do the prescribed work set for the 'between-visits' period. That there has been positive achievement in some cases of particular learning disability is reflected in the recorded results kept by the remedial teachers – a random sample of which is illustrated above in Table 8.

5.14 Principals, on the whole, are satisfied with the service. 'Weaknesses' that they see in it and to which they made reference include:

(a) There is uncertainty as to the continuance of the service after 1979 although the need will still exist.

(b) Visits by the remedial teacher are not frequent enough, although the 1979 itinerant teacher who visited about once every three weeks provided a much better service than the five-week cycle of 1978. However, it applied only in one area – St George. More frequent visits were seen as providing a more effective remedial program for the pupil, and a more supportive program for the classroom teacher. In 6.2 (a) it was suggested that there is need to reconsider the needs of the total area and the integration of existing services in the interests of children, teachers and home supervisors.

(c) Some principals and teachers expressed the view that all children requiring remedial assistance should be the sole responsibility of the remedial teacher.

5.15 Parental interest in and response to the service were varied. About 15 to 20 per cent of parents contacted the remedial teacher regularly. In some cases the remedial teacher has visited homes to discuss programs and to enlist the support of parents. In one case the co-operation of parents was sought to have the child participate in the Bush Children's Health Scheme. Liaison between the remedial teacher and the Scheme's field officer and the Head Office of the Scheme is close. There is, however, a need for a greater involvement of parents in the remedial service.

Resources

5.16 The initial supply of resources and equipment was recommended by a small committee working with a member of the P.C.A.P. State Committee who was a regional guidance officer. The I.C.S.E.U. and remedial and resource teachers were also represented on the Committee so that a wide range of theoretical knowledge and practical experience were available to the P.C.A.P. State Committee. Remedial teachers implementing the service found the resources satisfactory. As some of the pupils were still being assisted on entry to secondary education a need for additional resources for the upper primary/ lower secondary student became manifest.

5.17 With the establishment of the St George base in 1979 and the relocation of the remedial van at that base, most resources stayed with the van. Some additional resources for use by the Charleville-based teacher were supplied, but there is need for a review of resources, and some arrangements made to record loans to and borrowings by classroom teachers.

Mobile Van Unit

5.18 The mobile van, designed as a multi-purpose unit, had travelled more than 60 000 kilometres in its two years of service. It was used only minimally for withdrawal/ testing/assessment purposes and not at all for excursions and week-end camps, nor by the speech therapist. It is due for replacement and a different kind of vehicle would appear more suited to the service that has developed. The design of the vehicle reduced its effectiveness for teaching purposes. It had insufficient storage space for resources, proved unsuitable because of small engine capacity, was not dust proof and lacked air conditioning. A recommendation is made in 6.3.

5.19 In providing the service, the P.C.A.P. State Committee stressed the pilot nature of the project and recognised its limitations which were a function of the size of the area with its inherent problem of distance, the numbers of children requiring remedial assistance, and the limited number of specialist remedial teachers available to provide the service. However the Mobile Remedial Service has had positive outcomes. It has met, albeit to a limited degree, a specific and urgent need in the South-West P.C.A.P. Area of Queensland. Diagnostic assessment of children in need and referral to remedial teachers was carried out at the primary school level in non-State and State schools including children enrolled with School of the Air and/or with the Primary Correspondence School. Programs based on the results of the diagnostic survey were developed and implemented by the remedial teachers

in intensive individual or group sessions in a withdrawal situation, or by the classroom teacher using individualised programs in the classroom situation. Adequate resource materials for primary pupils were available. The remedial teachers provided strong support to the principal and school staff in a variety of ways such as consultancy and discussion, demonstration of teaching techniques, and program development and implementation.

5.20 It is regrettable that the Program, of necessity, was only a pilot project serving selected pupils in selected schools in three different geographical areas for one year only. Not all children needing assistance could be helped fully and some were not helped at all. For example, secondary students were not included nor were some pupils in the most remote primary schools. It is perhaps these pupils and their teachers who have the greatest need.

5.21 This situation is further aggravated by the proposed termination of the project at the end of 1979 after functioning effectively for two full years. Research evidence clearly indicates that in the area of reading disability unless contact is maintained, and continued support and assistance provided, progress in reading ceases. The pilot project has clearly established the nature and extent of this problem, and that a peripatetic service can meet this particular need. It also emphasises the need for an expanded service. The service, therefore, should not be abandoned. At the time of writing this report it seems unlikely that it will continue in 1980 in view of the difficulty of obtaining the highly trained specialist personnel required outside the Special Education Division of the Department of Education and the unavailability in 1980 of such teachers from the Department itself in view of present exigencies of the teaching service as a whole. In view of the strong local support, the number of children already assisted and requiring continuing assistance, as well as the number not yet assisted, the service should continue.

CHAPTER 6

RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

6.1 In view of the clearly established need, and the positive outcomes of the pilot project, the following recommendations are made for consideration by the P.C.A.P. State Committee.

The Service

6.2 *Delivery Model:*

The service delivery model used in 1979 with two teachers working from St George and Charleville as bases has proved the most satisfactory in terms of frequency of contact with children and teachers in case of service delivery to the centres in these two areas. However, two teachers cannot satisfactorily service the total South-West P.C.A.P. Area. It would seem desirable therefore to consider the total provision of remedial/resource services provided by both the Department of Education and by P.C.A.P. in the Area and for a co-ordination and rationalisation of service provision and delivery to cater for the needs of the total area which at present are not being adequately met.

6.3 *Resources:*

(a) The vehicle is about due for replacement. The present vehicle has proved unsatisfactory in a number of ways – design, engine capacity, comfort. It is suggested that the replacement vehicle be air-conditioned, and be designed to meet the special needs of this particular service. It would seem that a panel van or a station wagon would be satisfactory.

(b) Provision of some additional resources to meet the needs of upper primary and lower secondary pupils should be considered as the need for such resources had manifested itself during the pilot program.

(c) Parents were not involved as resource people to help their children or other children to the maximum degree possible. Parent work-shops conducted with the Principal and/or classroom teacher would inform and assist parents in providing help for their own (or other) children both formally and informally.

(d) A review of allocation of resources between the two remedial teachers and/or provision of additional resources are necessary if the two teachers are to continue to work from two different bases.

6.4 *Programs:*

(a) The programs provided by the remedial teachers were designed to meet the greatest need of the greatest number of children and in the child's own school. In view of the constraints – only two teachers in the area, the distances to be travelled, the number of children to be served – the programs provided were appropriate in the circumstances. Additional staff would enable a greater extension of the service to cater for children in need of assistance and in curriculum areas other than that of language arts.

6.5 *Pupils:*

(a) Ways and means of meeting the needs of children with a learning disability who are enrolled with the Primary Correspondence School need further consideration.

(b) While it was not proposed that the talented or gifted child would be catered for in the pilot program, in any extension or integration of the service with services provided by the Department of Education such needs might be considered.

(c) Residential schools for selected pupils and of one or two weeks duration could add a new and valuable dimension to the program if planned along the lines of the annual Tallebudgera camp as organised by the I.C.S.E.U.

(d) In any re-organisation, extension or integration of the service the needs of secondary students should receive consideration.

6.6 *Remedial Teachers:*

(a) The remedial teachers should have more opportunities for access to professional colleagues and to senior officers at the Regional Office level. Visits should be incorporated in the Program.

(b) The provision of a part-time teacher aide for one day per week to coincide with the remedial teacher's office day at St George and at Charleville would be of great assistance.

(c) The P.C.A.P. State Committee might consider the desirability of developing a role statement for the guidance of the remedial teachers who appear to have concentrated unduly on the withdrawal/remedial model.

Conclusion

6.7 The problem of distance has always existed and will continue to exist in Queensland and it constitutes a major problem in the supply and delivery of education and other services in this State. The provision of Special Education services by the Department of Education and pilot programs such as the Mobile Remedial Unit Service increase the demands for the continuation and/or extension of such services.

6.8 The Mobile Remedial Unit pilot program has clearly demonstrated the extent of the problem of learning difficulties being experienced by children in the South-West P.C.A.P. area and the difficulties and costs associated in meeting to a limited degree those needs. There is no doubt that a service to meet these needs should continue to be provided. If such continued provision to meet fully the needs of the area is beyond the capacity and resources of the P.C.A.P. State Committee, then alternatives for the provision, supply and delivery of such a service should be explored and implemented in the interests of children, teachers and home supervisors in this and other remote areas of Queensland.

S. R. Hampson, Government Printer, Queensland—1980